

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6353
INFO COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 4100

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, JA
SUBJECT: OKINAWA LAND LAW

REF: TOKYO 1612

SUMMARY: WITH DIET HAVING BEGUN CONSIDERATION OF
OKINAWA LAND LAW, THERE IS INCREASING TALK OF COMPROMISE
TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OKINAWA PREFECTURAL OPPOSITION
WHICH CENTERS ON FAILURE OF DRAFT BILL TO ADDRESS
PREFECTURAL WIDE LAND TITLE PROBLEM. WHATEVER OUTCOME,
JAPANESE OFFICIALS HAVE ASSURED US THAT U.S. SECURITY
INTERESTS WILL NOT BE AFFECTED. END SUMMARY.

1. DIET LOWER HOUSE BEGAN MARCH 15 CONSIDERATION OF
OKINAWA LAND LAW TO REPLACE SPECIAL TEMPORARY REVERSION
LAW WHICH EXPIRES MAY 14 (REFTEL PROVIDES BACKGROUND).
ISSUE HAS ATTRACTED INCREASING ATTENTION IN MEDIA
AND AMONG OPPOSITION PARTIES AND THERE IS SPECULATION THAT
GOVERNMENT BILL WILL BE AMENDED OR REJECTED.

2. JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY (JSP), CLEAN GOVERNMENT PARTY
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(CGP), AND JAPAN COMMUNIST PARTY (JCP) HAVE ANNOUNCED
OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT BILL AND SUPPORT FOR ALTERNA-
TIVE PROPOSAL DRAFTED BY OKINAWAN PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT.
LATTER PROPOSAL WOULD ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING
LAND TITLE PROBLEMS NOT ONLY IN BASE AREAS BUT ELSEWHERE
THROUGHOUT OKINAWA PREFECTURE, PROPONENTS ARGUE THAT
GOVERNMENT BILL IGNORES OFF-BASE PROBLEMS, REFLECTING

GOVERNMENT PREOCCUPATION WITH SECURITY MATTERS AT EXPENSE
PREFECTURAL INTERESTS. NOT SURPRISINGLY, PREFECTURAL
DRAFT DOES NOT INCLUDE PROVISION FOR U.S. FORCES USE
OF LAND INVOLVED.

3. IN RECENT MEETING WITH POL COUNSELOR, JAPAN DEFENSE
AGENCY (JDA) VICE MINISTER MARUYAMA ACKNOWLEDGED SHORT-
COMINGS IN GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL, WHICH HIS AGENCY
HAD DRAFTED. HE COMPLAINED THAT OTHER AGENCIES WITH
INTERESTS IN OKINAWA, NOTABLY OKINAWA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY,
HAD DODGED ISSUE, PASSING BUCK TO JDA. MARUYAMA SAID
THAT PREFECTURAL CONCERNS WERE VALID AND WOULD HAVE
TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. RESOLVING TITLE PROBLEMS
WAS ACTUALLY MORE DIFFICULT OFF BASE THAN ON, BECAUSE
OF PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OFF BASE. FOR EXAMPLE IT WOULD
BE EASIER TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES AMONG OWNERS OF PROPERTY
UNDER A US FORCES RUNWAY THAN TO RESOLVE COMPARABLE
PROBLEMS WHERE PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS HAD BUILT HOTEL
ON DISPUTED LAND.

4. MARUYAMA SAID SOME COMPROMISE WOULD BE ESSENTIAL
AND CITED TWO IDEAS NOW BEING DISCUSSED: (1) AMEND
GOJ BILL TO EXTEND ITS COVERAGE TO LAND-TITLE PROBLEMS
THROUGHOUT OKINAWA. THIS MIGHT PROVE IMPOSSIBLE IN
SHORT TIME LEFT BEFORE MAY 14. (2) EXTEND OKINAWA
REVERSION SPECIAL MEASURES LAW FOR ONE OR TWO YEARS,
DURING WHICH GOVERNMENT WOULD PREPARE NEW LEGISLATION FOR
RESOLVING LAND TITLE PROBLEMS THROUGHOUT PREFECTURE.
MARUYAMA THOUGHT THAT THIS MIGHT BE SIMPLEST AND MOST
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POLITICALLY APPEALING SOLUTION. ANY COMPROMISE WOULD
PROBABLY ALSO ESTABLISH DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF
OKINAWAN LAND SURVEY, SINCE OPPOSITION PARTIES, INCLUDING
NEW LIBERAL CLUB (NLC), HAVE CRITICIZED OPEN-ENDED NATURE
OF GOVERNMENT DRAFT BILL. DURING INITIAL DEBATE MARCH 15
BOTH PRIME MINISTER AND DEFENSE AGENCY DIRECTOR GENERAL
HINTED AT READINESS TO CONSIDER SOME COMPROMISE.

5. MARUYAMA STRESSED THAT REGARDLESS OF OUTCOME,
U.S. INTERESTS WILL NOT BE AFFECTED. JAPAN CON-
STITUTIONAL OBLIGATION TO HONOR TREATY OBLIGATION TO US.
FONOFF OFFICIALS HAVE ALSO REITERATED ASSURANCES TO
US ON THIS POINT. IRONICALLY, HOWEVER, JAPAN SELF DEFENSE
FORCE FACILITIES ON OKINAWA COULD BE SUBJECT TO
LEGAL CHALLENGE SINCE THEY LACK TREATY SANCTION.

6. COMMENT. PROSPECTS FOR PASSAGE INTACT OF
GOVERNMENT BILL SEEM REMOTE. WHILE PRECISE
OUTCOME NOT CLEAR, COMPROMISE FORMULA INVOLVING

RECOGNITION OF GENERAL OKINAWA LAND-TITLE PROBLEM
AND AGREED TIME LIMIT SEEM INCREASINGLY LIKELY. IN
ANY EVENT, EMBASSY ACCEPTS JAPANESE ASSURANCES THAT RESULT
WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT US SECURITY INTERESTS ON OKINAWA.
BUTTON

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Message Attributes

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